

# PARTNERSHIP WITH THE CENTERS FOR MEDICARE AND MEDICAID SERVICES

## ISSUE

To further the mission of the Agency, the Indian Health Service (IHS) has developed a close working relationship with the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS).

## BACKGROUND

With the passage of the Indian Health Care Improvement Act in 1976, the IHS was given the authority to bill for services provided to American Indians and Alaska Natives who are beneficiaries of CMS programs. The Congress directed that revenue accruing to the IHS was to be used to ensure that IHS facilities met the safety standards, including appropriate equipping, staffing, quality of clinical care, and accreditation of services. As a result of this income, all IHS hospitals and IHS clinics are accredited by the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations or Association of Accredited Ambulatory Health Centers.

## SITUATION

As a result of annual rate setting negotiations that are approved by the Office of Management and Budget, the IHS receives in excess of \$650 million (FY 2006 estimate) in revenue from CMS for services provided to Medicaid, Medicare, and the State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP) eligible patients. In recent years the IHS and CMS have met regularly at the senior management level to ensure close coordination of policies, foster increased State/Tribal innovation, and develop ways to improve access to care for American Indians and Alaska Natives. The establishment of a CMS Tribal Technical Advisory Group (TTAG) of Tribal leaders has improved Tribal input on various CMS payment and program policies and regulations. The IHS has been able to provide assistance to CMS in its efforts to improve communications with Tribal and State governments in the implementation of Medicaid, Medicare, and SCHIP. Recently the IHS and CMS partnership has expanded to the CMS satellite network to 57 Tribal and IHS health facilities where billing agents can receive CMS sponsored training broadcasts.

## OPTIONS/PLANS

To increase service access, the IHS, CMS, and TTAG will continue to collaborate the fostering of more culturally appropriate, non-institutional services for American Indian and Alaska Native beneficiaries. In collaboration with CMS, the IHS will continue to track Medicaid and Medicare reform proposals, program policy, and regulatory changes that impact on Indian health programs.

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

For referral to the appropriate spokesperson, contact the IHS Public Affairs Staff at 301-443-3593.

